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ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN THE REGION OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Report of the First Committee (Part VIII)*

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The First Committee considered agenda item 67 jointly with all the other items relating to disarmament and international security (for details, see A/51/566). For the documents before the Committee under item 67, see A/51/566, paragraph 3.

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.1/51/L.28 AND REV.1 AND 2

2. At the 17th meeting of the Committee, on 7 November 1996, the representative of Egypt introduced a draft resolution entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East" (A/C.1/51/L.28).

3. Subsequently, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution submitted by the same sponsor (A/C.1/51/L.28/Rev.1), which contained the following changes.

(a) The fourth preambular paragraph, which had read:

* The reports of the Committee on all the agenda items relating to disarmament and international security (items 60, 61 and 63-81) will be issued under the symbol A/51/566 and addenda.

"Emphasizing also that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, especially in regions of tension, such as the Middle East, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, enhances global and regional peace and security",

was deleted;

(b) The seventh preambular paragraph, which had read:

"Emphasizing that nuclear safety has to prevail over all considerations",

was deleted;

(c) At the end of operative paragraph 3, the words "and the statement made by the President and accepted by the General Conference on 20 September 1996 regarding the implementation of Agency safeguards in the Middle East" were deleted.

4. At the 24th meeting, on 15 November, the representative of Egypt introduced a further revised draft resolution (A/C.1/51/L.28/Rev.2), which contained the following changes:

(a) The fourth preambular paragraph, which had read:

"Recognizing the valuable contribution that the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones has made to the maintenance of international peace and security",

was deleted;

(b) The eleventh preambular paragraph, which had read:

"Noting also the decisions adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the Conference",

was deleted;

(c) Operative paragraph 4, which had read:

"4. Stresses the importance of achieving rapid progress in the bilateral Middle East peace negotiations for the promotion of security in the region",

was replaced with the following text:

"4. Notes the importance of the bilateral Middle East negotiations and the multilateral Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security in promoting mutual confidence and security in the Middle East, including the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone".

5. At the 25th meeting, on 18 November, the representative of Israel introduced an amendment (A/C.1/51/L.54) to revised draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.28/Rev.2, by which operative paragraph 4 of the revised draft resolution would be replaced with the following text:

"4. Notes the importance of the ongoing bilateral Middle East peace negotiations and the activities of the multilateral Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security in promoting mutual confidence and security in the Middle East, including the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone".

6. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the amendment (A/C.1/51/L.54) to revised draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.28/Rev.2 by a recorded vote of 61 to 28, with 33 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Against: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

Abstaining: Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

7. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.28/Rev.2, as amended, without a vote (see para. 8).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

8. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3263 (XXIX) of 9 December 1974, 3474 (XXX) of 11 December 1975, 31/71 of 10 December 1976, 32/82 of 12 December 1977, 33/64 of 14 December 1978, 34/77 of 11 December 1979, 35/147 of 12 December 1980, 36/87 A and B of 9 December 1981, 37/75 of 9 December 1982, 38/64 of 15 December 1983, 39/54 of 12 December 1984, 40/82 of 12 December 1985, 41/48 of 3 December 1986, 42/28 of 30 November 1987, 43/65 of 7 December 1988, 44/108 of 15 December 1989, 45/52 of 4 December 1990, 46/30 of 6 December 1991, 47/48 of 9 December 1992, 48/71 of 16 December 1993, 49/71 of 15 December 1994 and 50/66 of 12 December 1995 on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East,

Recalling also the recommendations for the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East consistent with paragraphs 60 to 63, and in particular paragraph 63 (d), of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly,[1]

Emphasizing the basic provisions of the above-mentioned resolutions, which call upon all parties directly concerned to consider taking the practical and urgent steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East and, pending and during the establishment of such a zone, to declare solemnly that they will refrain, on a reciprocal basis, from producing, acquiring or in any other way possessing nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices and from permitting the stationing of nuclear weapons on their territory by any third party, to agree to place their nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards and to declare their support for the establishment of the zone and to deposit such declarations with the Security Council for consideration, as appropriate,

Reaffirming the inalienable right of all States to acquire and develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes,

Emphasizing the need for appropriate measures on the question of the prohibition of military attacks on nuclear facilities,

Bearing in mind the consensus reached by the General Assembly since its thirty-fifth session that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would greatly enhance international peace and security,

Desirous of building on that consensus so that substantial progress can be made towards establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East,

Welcoming all initiatives leading to general and complete disarmament, including in the region of the Middle East, and in particular on the

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[1] Resolution S/10-2.

establishment therein of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons,

Noting the peace negotiations in the Middle East, which should be of a comprehensive nature and represent an appropriate framework for the peaceful settlement of contentious issues in the region,

Recognizing the importance of credible regional security, including the establishment of a mutually verifiable nuclear-weapon-free zone,

Emphasizing the essential role of the United Nations in the establishment of a mutually verifiable nuclear-weapon-free zone,

Having examined the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/66,[2]

1. Urges all parties directly concerned to consider seriously taking the practical and urgent steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and, as a means of promoting this objective, invites the countries concerned to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;[3]

2. Calls upon all countries of the region that have not done so, pending the establishment of the zone, to agree to place all their nuclear activities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards;

3. Takes note of resolution GC(40)RES/22, adopted on 20 September 1996 by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency at its fortieth regular session, concerning the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East;

4. Notes the importance of the ongoing bilateral Middle East peace negotiations and the activities of the multilateral Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security in promoting mutual confidence and security in the Middle East, including the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone;

5. Invites all countries of the region, pending the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, to declare their support for establishing such a zone, consistent with paragraph 63 (d) of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly,[1] and to deposit those declarations with the Security Council;

6. Also invites those countries, pending the establishment of the zone, not to develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or permit the stationing on their territories, or territories under their control, of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices;

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[2] A/51/286.

[3] United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 729, No. 10485.

7. Invites the nuclear-weapon States and all other States to render their assistance in the establishment of the zone and at the same time to refrain from any action that runs counter to both the letter and the spirit of the present resolution;

8. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;[2]

9. Invites all parties to consider the appropriate means that may contribute towards the goal of general and complete disarmament and the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the region of the Middle East;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to pursue consultations with the States of the region and other concerned States, in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 46/30 and taking into account the evolving situation in the region, and to seek from those States their views on the measures outlined in chapters III and IV of the study annexed to his report[4] or other relevant measures, in order to move towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East;

11. Also requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

12. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled 'Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East'.

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[4] A/45/435.